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Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AGRE-00 STR-07 COME-00 OMB-01
TRSE-00 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /041 W
----------005424 030757Z /11
R 021600Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2567
INFO EC COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 THE HAGUE 2446

DEPARTMENT PASS AGRICULTURE

USEEC, USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, ETRD
SUBJECT: INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL EXPORT POLICY

1. SUGGESTIONS FOR INCREASING U.S. EXPORTS OF NON-AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS ARE BEING PASSED SEPTEL (THE HAGUE 2407). THIS MESSAGE WILL DEAL EXCLUSIVELY WITH AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS, SINCE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE ARE OFTEN QUITE DISTINCT FROM THOSE IN INDUSTRY.

2. ANY DISCUSSION OF THE PROBLEMS OF INCREASING U.S. AGRI-CULTURAL EXPORTS TO THE NETHERLANDS AND, OF COURSE, THE EC MUST BEGIN WITH MENTION OF THE COMMUNITY'S COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY. THE PRODUCT COVERAGE OF THE CAP IS NOW SO DIVERSE AND ITS TRADE RESTRICTIVE MEASURES SO ALL ENCOMPASSING AS TO POSE PROBLEMS (AND OFTENTIMES SERIOUS PROBLEMS) FOR NEARLY ALL U.S. FARM EXPORTS TO THE EC. IT IS OUR VIEW THAT THE BEST CHANCE OF ACHIEVING A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH WITH REGARD TO EXPANSION OF U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS TO THE EC IS AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. EXPORTERS OF MOST U.S. FARM PRODUCTS FACE A SERIES OF FORMI-
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DABLE TRADE BARRIERS AND THIS FACT MUST BE BORNE IN MIND BY EXPORT POLICY PLANNERS. IMPROVED MARKET ACCESS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS MUST BE GIVEN THE HIGHEST PRIORITY. WITHOUT LIBERALI-ZATION OF AGRICULTURAL TRADE BARRIERS, EVEN THE MOST IMAGINATIVE AND FAR-REACHING EXPORT PROMOTION IDEAS COULD HAVE MINIMAL OR NO IMPACT.

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3. AS A SECOND GENERAL VIEW, IT SEEMS TO US THAT A SERIOUS AGRICULTURAL EXPORT EFFORT SHOULD BEGIN WITH EDUCATION OF AGRI-BUSINESSMEN. WHILE IT IS NOT TRUE OF THE LARGE EXPORTERS OF BULK COMMODITIES (GRAINS, SOYBEANS, COTTON, ETC.) WHO HAVE LONG BEEN INVOLVED IN OVERSEAS MARKETS, THE EXPORT MINDEDNESS OF MOST PROCESSED FOOD AND SECONDARY AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY BUSINESSMEN IS VERY LOW. MANY DUTCH AGRI-BUSINESSMEN CRITICIZE THEIR AMERICAN COUNTERPARTS FOR ONLY THINKING IN TERMS OF EXPORTS IN TIMES OF OVER SUPPLY IN THE UNITED STATES. AMERICAN EXPORTERS, THEY SAY, ARE NOT INTERESTED IN A SUSTAINED OR INCREASING EXPORT EFFORT; THEY ONLY LOOK TO OVERSEAS MARKETS WHEN DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION FALLS SHORT OF TAKING OFF THE MARKET ALL, OR VITURALLY ALL, OF THE PRODUCTION. THIS ATTITUDE MUST BE CHANGED. THEY MUST BE MADE TO UNDERSTAND THE NEED TO BE A RELIABLE SUPPLIER AS WELL AS A QUALITY SUPPLIER. WE CAN ENVISION A SERIES OF QUOTE THINK EXPORTS UNQUOTE SEMINARS. THOSE WOULD HAVE TO BE ORGANIZED BY COMMODITY, SINCE THE PROBLEMS FACED BY EXPORTERS OF ONE PRODUCT CAN DIFFER GREATLY FROM THOSE OF ANOTHER PRODUCT. THESE MEETINGS COULD SERVE AT LEAST 2 PURPOSES. FIRST, IT WOULD PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE USG TO ENCOURAGE BUSINESSES TO LOOK TOWARDS EXPORT MARKETS, TO BRIEF THEM ON EXISTING PROGRAMS, AND ADVISE THEM OF POSSIBLE MARKET OPPORTUNITIES. SECOND, BUSINESSMEN WOULD HAVE THE CHANCE TO OFFER SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO IMPROVE OUR EXPORT PERFORMANCE THROUGH MARKET PROMOTIONS AND GIVE THE USG VALUABLE INSIGHT INTO THE PROBLEM THEY FACE IN COMPETING FOR
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OVERSEAS MARKETS.

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4. IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE GENERAL POINTS, WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING SOMEWHAT MORE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS:

1) GREATER AND MORE EXTENSIVE VISIBILITY IN TRADE SHOWS. AT MANY INTERNATIONAL FOOD SHOWS/FAIRS, THE U.S. EXHIBIT IS DWARFED BY THOSE OF OUR MAJOR FOREIGN COMPETITORS. THESE SHOWS ARE IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING TRADE CONTACTS, BUT PERHAPS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, THESE EVENTS OFFER THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO PROJECT AN IMAGE, OR SHOW INTEREST IN THE BUSINESS OF FOOD TRADE AND TO KEEP THE PRESENCE OF AMERICAN FOOD PRODUCTS EVER IN THE PUBLIC VIEW.

2) ENCOURAGE THE EXPANSION OF THE "CHECKAGE" SYSTEM THROUGH THE STATE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS TO EMBRACE MORE COMMODITIES OR PRODUCTS--THE PROCEEDS TO BE USED TO MEET THE COMPETITION THROUGH PROMOTION OR ABSORPTION OF PART OR ALL OF FREIGHT COST AS THE PARTICULAR SITUATION MAY DICTATE FOR THE GIVEN COMMODITY.

3) INAUGURATE A USA OR USDA SEAL OF APPROVAL PROGRAM WHICH WOULD PROVIDE AN INCENTIVE IN TERMS OF SOME TYPE OF RECOGNITION FOR EXPORT EXPANSION.
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4) EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF ENCOURAGING EXPORT TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, PARTICULARLY FOR SMALL EXPORT MINDED COMPANIES WHO COULD WORK TOGETHER FOR EXPORT EXPANSION WITHOUT FEAR OF VIOLATING ANTI-TRUST LAWS.
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TAGS: EAGR, ETRD
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